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LG/MAIROBI

PLANNING FOR WOMEN IN THE UNITED NATIONS

Introduction

1. This note has been prepared as an introduction to the ECA Programme Budget 1988-1989 and the Medium-Term Plan 1990-1995 as they relate to women and the System-Wide Medium Term Plan for Women and Development 1990-1995. In the United Nations there are a set of rules and regulations[1/] governing programme planning in the organization including the women's programme. These rules have been developed in compliance with General Assembly resolutions 37/234 and 38/227. The entire process consists of planning, programming, monitoring and evaluations exercises. Each of these exercises have detailed instructions with which United Nations bodies have to comply. The instrument for planning is the Medium-Term Plan (covering a period of six years) which gives the general orientation of the activities in the United Nations. Programming is done biennially and consists of the Programme Budget and Programme Performance report; these give the precise work plans and involve delivery of outputs. Finally, the valuation section looks critically at achievements and provides directions for future plans.

Medium-Term Plan

2. The instrument that translated legislative mandates into programmes in the Medium-Term Plan. Thus, the current Women's Programme (1986-1987) as well as that planned for the 1988-1989 biennium is derived from the Medium-Term Plan 1989 which contains policy orientation and goals derived from the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women in general, and the Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women in Africa beyond the United Nations Decade for Women in particular. It is to be noted that legislative mandates can only be given by United Nations inter-governmental organs, however, decisions or conclusions of inter-governmental organs that are not organs of the United Nations may become a mandate after they are endorsed by an inter-governmental organ of the United Nations.

3. The planning exercise is meant to ensure close collaboration between the member States and the Secretariat in formulating the actions of the

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1/ See Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the programme aspect of the budget, the monitoring of implementation and the method of evaluation - ST/SGB/204, 4 September 1984.

Organization. Furthermore, all programmes of the organizations are subject to periodic reviews by all concerned. Attempt is made in the plan to identify what is feasible and politically acceptable by member States. Clearly available resources determine the scope and design of the whole programme, however, once these are determined by the General Assembly, it is the duty of the Secretariat to ensure that the resources are utilized in accordance with legislative mandates and "in the most effective and economic manner". It is to be noted that the rules and regulations mentioned above apply to all activities undertaken by the United Nations irrespective of the source of financing. This is an important provision in view of the fact that a large percentage of women's activities in the ECA were and still are financed by extra-budgetary sources. In this respect rule 101.1(b) states that "Planning for activities to be partially or fully financed by extra-budgetary funds shall be provisional and such activities will be implemented only if adequate funds are made available".

4. Since planning is a collaborative exercise between member States and the Secretariat, the medium-term plan contains two separate objectives to be achieved within the planned period (a) objectives that are to be achieved by Governments or by inter-governmental action and (b) objectives to be achieved by the Secretariat. The latter have to be concrete and time-limited objectives conducive to evaluation and verification. A strategy paragraph in the plan indicates course of action that will be taken such as research, workshops, publications etc. during the medium-term plan to achieve the objectives of the Secretariat.

Finally, rule 103.11 states that the medium-term plan can only be modified if there are new inter-governmental mandates of if the Secretary-General considers some of the mandates obsolete.

Programme Budget 1988-1989

5. Within the framework of medium-term plan as stated above, biennial programme budgets are drafted by each organization. The programme budget budget in fact translates the strategies of the medium-term plan into concrete activities. The programme budget is usually divided into programmes, sub-programmes, programme elements, outputs and users. The glossary of programming and planning terms gives the following definitions.

Programme

This consists of the activities within a major programme undertaken by a department such as ECA e.g. work in the ECA on transport and communication in the Africa region.

Sub-programme

This refers to all activities within a programme aimed at achieving one or a few closely related objective as set out in the medium-term plan e.g. work in the ECA specifically directed to the advancement of women.

Programme element

Consists of activities within a sub-programme which addresses specific and well-circumscribed subject matter and is usually designed to produce a few final outputs.

Final output

It is a product or service delivered by the Secretariat to users (e.g. member States) external to the Secretariat of the United Nations System. All Secretariat work needed to generate the final output is considered intermediate activity e.g. work undertaken to prepare reports or sales publications are considered intermediate activity.

6. In the Programme Budget 1988-1989, the sub-programme on the integration of women in development will continue to implement the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women in general and the Arusha Strategies for the advancement of women in Africa in particular. The overall mandates of General Assembly resolution 40/105 and 40/108 will be utilized. Major areas of concern in the Programme will be efforts to include women's needs in national development plans, strengthen the ability of women themselves to plan by providing them with guidelines, advisory services and an enlarged data base which policy makers use. Dissemination of information will be given high priority and the strengthening of national subregional and regional machineries. A very important task will be the monitoring of the changing socio-economic conditions of women in Africa to the

the year 2000 in order to alert policy makers to necessary action. The programme is also to initiate projects to upgrade the participation of women in the informal sector and encourage women's entrepreneurial development.

7. The sub-programme for the integration of women in development in 1988-1989 contains four major programme elements with their outputs. It envisages a number of technical cooperation projects primarily carried out by the MULPOC women's programme. Unlike other biennium, however, the 1988-1989 programme budget of ECA as a whole, reflects the inclusion of women's activities in the outputs of programmes other than those contained in the sub-programme for women. This is due to General Assembly Resolution 40/105 which called upon regional commissions "to incorporate women's concern at all levels in their overall work programme for the biennium 1988-1989 taking into account the roles and responsibilities of the regional commissions in developing and implementing the system-wide medium-term plan for women and development and the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Another important General Assembly resolution is 40/108 calls on regional commissioners "to take the necessary measures to ensure that all project and programmes take into account the need for the complete integration of women and women's concerns".

System-Wide Medium-Term Plan 1990-1995

8. The United Nations Decade for Women has witnessed considerable growth in women's programmes and projects and the lessons learnt provided the ideas for the proposals contained in the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the advancement of women. The strategies are presently the global guidelines utilized by all those concerned with programming for women.

Thus the System-Wide Medium-Term Plan for women and development seeks to translate the developmental dimensions of the Nairobi Strategies into activities that the UN systems (including governments) should be able to accomplish during the period 1990-1995. Substantially, therefore, it deals with employment health and education as well as other areas under the major objectives of development in the strategies: food, water and agriculture, industry, trade and commercial services; science and technology, communications, housing, settlement, community development and transport energy, environmental and social services.

9. The System-Wide Medium-Term Plan thus consists of six programmes and 22 sub-programmes related to the advancement of women for the period 1990-1995. The role of governments as well as the role of UN System are clearly set out. It is believed that the implementation of this plan will result in measurable improvement in the System's contributions to the betterment of the condition of women by 1995.

In order to implement the plan, the Organization of the System have each agreed to incorporate these aspects of work that fall within their competence in their own proposed medium-term plans and programmes for the period 1990-1995. Hence, the ECA draft Medium-Term Plan in 1990-1995 is now based on the System-Wide Medium-Term Plan. The chart in the Annex indicates the relationship between the different parts of the exercise in planning for women in the United Nations.

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA